

MEDIA RELEASE



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

RFS volunteers receive national honour

13 September 2013

Six NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) members have been awarded Australian Fire Service Medals (AFSM) to recognise their dedication and hard work.

The Australian Fire Service Medal is awarded as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours List for distinguished service by a member of an Australian fire service and is the highest NSW RFS award.

NSW RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons congratulated the medal recipients on their well-deserved achievement.

"These members have worked tirelessly to help to fight fires, prepare the community every bush fire season and ensure a new generation of volunteers were trained, mentored and encouraged," said Commissioner Fitzsimmons.

"They represent the very best of the RFS and I'm proud their service has been formally recognised with this national honour," Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

The AFSM recipients are Superintendant Christopher Favelle from Far West Team, Group Captain Elizabeth Ferris from New England Zone, Captain Ronald Headon from Mid West Team, Deputy Captain Keith Robinson from Illawarra Zone, Superintendant Arthur Sharp from Canobolas Zone and Superintendant Ian Stewart from Riverina Highlands.

Tamworth local Deputy Group Captain Kendall Thompson was also further recognised for his part in rescuing 47 people in the 2011 Lockyer Valley floods with a Group Bravery Citation.

The Group Bravery Citation is awarded to teams that demonstrate bravery in challenging circumstances as they protect the lives of others.

Deputy Group Captain Thompson, along with team members Kris Larkin and Matthew O'Brien, worked in gusting winds, torrential rain and poor visibility to airlift locals to safety.

Among those rescued were an elderly couple and their dog from inside their house which had swept 300 metres downstream. In another rescue they evacuated twelve people from a roof top.

The medals were awarded at an Investiture Ceremony at Government House on 11 September.

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